





Democratic  
Socialists of  
America

# Writing & Submitting National Resolutions

Spring 2019

# What We'll Discuss

This presentation is an overview of how to write and submit resolutions to be debated at the DSA National Convention in August 2019. For further help, email [convention@dsausa.org](mailto:convention@dsausa.org) or visit the Convention page of our website at [www.dsausa.org/national-convention](http://www.dsausa.org/national-convention).

# Key Questions

These slides will answer the following **key questions**:

- When can I submit a national resolution and what topics can it cover?
- What guidelines should my resolution follow?
- Where do I submit my resolution?
- What happens after I submit my resolution?

**Q1: When can I submit a national resolution and what topics can it cover?**

# Timeline & Topics

Any DSA member in good standing is eligible to submit resolutions for debate at the National Convention between **April 2nd-June 2nd, 2019.**

Resolutions can cover:

- **Political topics**, such as committing DSA to launch a campaign, adopt a particular stance on a political issue, endorse a candidate, or form a commission on a political issue, etc; and
- **Organizational topics**, such as hosting a conference, reforming the organization's dues structure, creating internal membership policies, etc.

**Q2: What guidelines  
should my resolution  
follow?**

# From the Preconvention Rules

In January, the NPC adopted a set of Preconvention Rules that outline the requirements for submitting resolutions. Visit

[www.dsausa.org/national-convention](http://www.dsausa.org/national-convention) for more information on the rules.

The key guidelines specify that:

- Any DSA member in good standing may author or co-author **up to 4 resolutions** for debate at the Convention
- Resolutions require a minimum of **50 signatures of support** from DSA members in good standing (*“signatures” should be compiled in a document or spreadsheet along with an email address or member ID number for DSA staff to verify*)
- There is **no cap** to the number of resolutions a member in good standing can sign on to support



# Writing Good Resolutions

Generally, resolutions should:

- Be no more than **a page** in length (so they can be projected in full during debate to make the amendments process more manageable)
- Should commit a specific body of DSA to take a specific action. For example:
  - *“DSA will launch a national campaign for a Green New Deal”*
  - *“The Democratic Socialist Labor Commission will launch a DSA labor academy”*
  - *“The National Political Committee will organize an activist conference”*

# Writing Good Resolutions Continued

Resolutions have two main sections, a **rational** and a **resolve**.

The **resolve** section of the resolution commits DSA or a part of DSA to take action. It usually starts with, **“Be it therefore, resolved.”** Language in the resolve **can be amended** by other DSA members at the Convention and if adopted, is published on the record (DSA website) following the Convention.

Here’s an example:

***Be it therefore resolved,** DSA will endorse Bernie Sanders in the US 2020 presidential elections; and*

***Be it further resolved,** DSA will organize a national independent expenditure campaign to support Bernie’s bid for the presidency.*

# Writing Good Resolutions Continued

The **rationale** section of the resolution includes background information about why the resolution is important. It usually starts with, “**Whereas.**” Language in the rationale is **not open for debate or amendment** because it is not published after the Convention (just background info).

Here’s an example:

***Whereas,** DSA grew tremendously through a national primary campaign to elect Bernie Sanders in 2016; and*

***Whereas,** DSA’s National Electoral Strategy adopted in 2018 emphasizes the benefits of independent electoral campaigns for DSA chapters;*

**Q3: Where do I submit  
my resolution?**

# Submitting a Resolution

Please prepare your resolution in this PDF template. You can do this by filling out the (1) title, (2) authors, (3) rationale, and (4) resolve sections of the form then saving it as a PDF file with the appropriate title.

To submit your resolution, please fill out [this google form](#) and upload your PDF through it by **June 2nd**.

**Q4: What happens after  
I submit my resolution?**

# Resolutions & Amendments Committee

After you submit your resolution it is reviewed by the National Resolutions and Amendments Committee to make sure there are no typos, grammatical errors, Constitutional or parliamentary issues, etc. with your submission.

In the event that the committee does identify areas of your resolution that need to be updated, they will contact you directly about making necessary changes.

The committee will also contact you if another member submits a similar resolution and they see potential for you to work together by combining your documents or if a member submits a minor amendment to your document they believe you may be willing to accept without debate.

# Other Info

Visit [www.dsausa.org/national-convention](http://www.dsausa.org/national-convention) or refer to the timeline included on our website for more information on important preconvention activities or contact us at [convention@dsausa.org](mailto:convention@dsausa.org) with additional questions.